

In support of SB 1095

February 23, 2023

Dear Chairs Senator McCrory, Representative Currey, and members of the housing committee:

My name is Tyzai Mazyck and I am 19 years old. I am a resident of Norwich, Connecticut. Recently a Waterbury resident and high schooler. I am also an ally of the Connecticut Justice Alliance. I am testifying in support of S.B. 1095: An Act Concerning the Use of School Resource Officers In Connecticut Schools.

All students deserve to feel safe, secure and supported in their places of learning. Yet too often our schools rely on policing to keep children in line, rather than funding professionals trained to deliver students necessary developmental and behavioral health resources.

According to research by [Connecticut Voices for Children](#), there's no evidence School Resource Officers (SROs) make students or staff safer, but schools with SROs have more arrests and more expulsions than their peer institutions without SROs.

There is a heavy over reliance on police and law enforcement to help address child behavior, emotions, or actions. Instead, we should be investing in a team of professionals that are rooted in the communities they serve and reflect the population that they support.

I attended a Waterbury high school that was focused on criminalizing kids for nonsense - like uniforms not even knowing if the kid has clothes at home. Waterbury is also known for some of the worst arrests, suspensions, and expulsion rates in the state. This is why my family made the decision to send me to Norwich with my father. We have to focus on how we are supporting kids and families. Stop reverting to practices that involve enforcement or legal interventions.

I strongly support S.B. 1095. I hope the Committee and Connecticut lawmakers will vote in favor of this bill. Together, we can build an educational system that is centered on the social-emotional well-being of students through care, resources, learning, and restoration.

Thank you for your time,

Tyzai Mazyck